

The Amazon Rain Forest

The Amazon rain forest is the largest rain forest in the world. It is 10,000,000 years old and many different kinds of plants and animals live here. The forest is important for the world's weather and wildlife, but it is disappearing fast. Read this book and learn about this wonderful forest—and its problems. What will its future be?

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Original American English

Number of words (excluding activities): 4,964

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ISBN 978-1-4058-8154-8



9 781405 881548 >

PENGUIN READERS

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Bernard Smith

THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST

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Level 2

Series Editors: Andy Hopkins and Jocelyn Potter

Pearson Education Limited
Edinburgh Gate, Harlow,
Essex CM20 2JE, England
and Associated Companies throughout the world.

ISBN: 978-1-4058-8154-8

First published by Penguin Books 2005
This edition first published 2008

3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4

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Typeset by Graphicraft Ltd, Hong Kong
Set in 11/14pt Gill Sans Light
Printed in China
SWTC/03

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INTRODUCTION

“Year after year, the rain forests of the world are disappearing—not only in South America, but in Africa and Asia, too. The world’s weather is changing, and we are losing plants and animals every day.”

A rain forest is not only trees. In every square kilometer of a rain forest, there are thousands and thousands of plants, birds, and animals. There is more life in a rain forest than in any other place.

But every year, these forests are disappearing. Between the years 1900 and 2000, we lost half of the world’s rain forests. They are home to between 10,000,000 and 80,000,000 different kinds of animals and plants. Nobody knows the number. And when the forests disappear, we lose the animals and plants, too.

The rain forest around the Amazon River is the largest in the world, and it is 10,000,000 years old. But the problem is the same. First, there were new roads through the forests. Then companies moved in. They cut down the trees and sold the wood. People built houses and farms, for coffee, fruit, rubber, and for cattle. The people of the forest—the Indians—lost their homes. Many lost their lives. The weather started changing, too.

Rain forests are important for the world’s weather and wildlife. Everybody knows that. But the farms and the wood from the forest trees bring a lot of money into South American countries. They also give work to the people. That is important, too.

What will the future of the Amazon rain forest be? It is a big problem. Are there any answers?

What Do You Know?

Find the answers to these questions later in the book.

- 1 The Amazon is a very long river. But how long is it?
a) about 4,000 kilometers b) about 6,000 kilometers
c) about 8,000 kilometers
- 2 It rains almost every day in the rain forest. How much rain falls in the wettest places in one year?
a) about 1 meter b) about 5 meters c) about 10 meters
- 3 There are rain forests in many countries. Where is the world’s biggest rain forest?
a) Asia b) Africa c) South America



- 4 This rain forest frog is very small, but it is famous. Why?
a) It makes a very loud noise.
b) It has a lot of colors.
c) It can kill you.
- 5 How many kinds of fruit are there in the world’s rain forests?
a) about 30
b) about 300
c) about 3,000

- 6 This fish is a piranha. Piranhas live in the Amazon, and they can eat a horse in five minutes. How big is a piranha?
a) under half a meter
b) a meter
c) more than a meter



The Amazon

The Amazon and the Nile are the longest rivers in the world. Some people say the Amazon is the longest. Some people say the Nile is longer. Each river is about 6,400 kilometers long. Let's take an airplane and fly over the Amazon.

We begin high in the Andes mountains, in the west of South America. These mountains go north to south through Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Some of the Andes mountains are more than 5,000 meters high. There is snow on their tops. There are hundreds of small rivers here. They run down the mountains to the east and into the forests. When the rivers meet, they get bigger and bigger.

Now we are flying over Brazil. The biggest river is now the Amazon. It is between one and ten kilometers wide here.



Hundreds of rivers run through the rain forest into the Amazon.
Next to them the forest is thick and green.

It is the wet time of the year. From March to August, after the heavy rain, the river in some places is fifteen meters higher than earlier in the year. In the center of the rain forest, for hundreds of kilometers, the trees are standing in water. The people here have to build their houses high above the water, and they go from place to place in boats. These are the "Big Water People," or *caboclos*. They are half Indian and half Portuguese. There are some small towns here and there, but most *caboclos* live with their families next to the rivers. In their towns there are sometimes churches, stores, and houses on the water.

We follow the river to the east, and we are in the center of Brazil. Here the Amazon meets the Negro, another very big river. The Amazon is now about twenty kilometers wide. There are no bridges anywhere over this river.

To the north, on the Negro River, we can see the busy city of Manaus. Almost 2,000,000 people live here. There are big buildings, parks, and a lot of cars. Manaus has a very large and busy port. Big ships come and go every day. They bring in things from other countries of the world. They carry away wood, rubber, and foods from the rain forest. Manaus is a big port, but it is 1,500 kilometers from the ocean. People often call the Amazon the "Ocean River" because two-thirds of the river is open to large ships.

Between August and November it rains almost every day, but only for a short time. The water goes down. You can walk in the forest again. This is a good time for vacations in the rain forest. Manaus has thousands of visitors every year. From the city, they can go on walks into the forest or take boat trips on the rivers.

Now, let's follow the ships to the east. The Amazon is getting wider and wider. More small rivers run into it. There are small towns here and there to the north and south.

We can see the Atlantic Ocean. The mouth of the Amazon here is 240 kilometers wide. About 20% of all the world's clean water is in the Amazon and its smaller rivers. Between the Andes mountains and the Atlantic Ocean, about 1,100 rivers run into the Amazon. They are small, but not very small—nine of them are bigger than the Mississippi!

PIRANHAS



There are more than 2,000 different kinds of fish in the Amazon. One famous fish is the piranha. Piranhas usually eat plants, seeds, fruits, and smaller fish, but sometimes there are hundreds of them in one place. Then they get very hungry, and they like to eat meat. They have big teeth, and they can eat an animal in a very short time. When an animal falls into the river, it disappears very quickly. Piranhas are small fish—under half a meter long—but in large numbers they can eat a horse (or a man) in minutes!



In this photo from above South America, you can see the Amazon rain forest in green. It is about 4,000,000 square kilometers. 3,500,000 square kilometers of the forest is in Brazil.

What Is a Rain Forest?

Most rain forests grow in countries with very hot, wet weather all through the year. Today there are large rain forests in Asia, in Africa, and in South America. The biggest of these—58% of the world's rain forest—is around the Amazon.

But a rain forest is not only trees. It is a wonderful world. Every square kilometer is full of thousands and thousands of plants, birds, and animals. There is more life in a rain forest than in any other place. There are between 10,000,000 and 80,000,000 different kinds of animals and plants in the world's rain forests. Nobody really knows the number, and most of them have no names. But maybe 90% of all the plants and animals in the world live there.

You can walk for an hour through the rain forest and see around 750 different kinds of trees. Every tree is a home, and food, for many animals and birds. The forest is full of life.

Life in the Trees

Think of a tall building with a lot of floors. Some people live on the ground floor. Other people live on the top floor. The forest has floors, too. Different plants and animals have their homes on the different floors.

From an airplane, you see only the thick, green leaves of the treetops, forty or fifty meters above the ground. Here, high above the forest floor, the trees have their flowers and fruits—but not all at the same time of the year. Every tree has its time. The forest is always green. The leaves fall—slowly—through the year. Hundreds of birds, of beautiful colors, live in the treetops. Many small animals live there, too. They climb and jump from tree to tree. Many of them never go down to the ground.

Every tree in the forest wants to grow up to the sunlight.

Under the thick, green leaves there is not much light. It is dark and wet all the time. When a big tree falls, the small trees grow quickly up to the light. Here we also find many long, thin plants. Some climb around the trees up to the light. Thousands of small plants grow on the trees, too. Their roots grow into the wood—or around it, in the air. Other plants send roots down to the ground.

On the forest floor, under the trees, it is always wet and dark. Often, the trees stand in water for many months of the year. The ground is thick with dead leaves and plants. Fruits and seeds fall from the treetops and grow in the soil. New plants grow and climb. Most of them die, but a small number grow tall. Large animals live here on the forest floor. Some kinds of plants grow here all the time, too. They like this dark, wet world.

The tallest trees often have thick, wide roots under the ground and above it. These make the tree strong.



These thick roots above the ground make the tallest trees stronger.

The Weather

The weather in the Amazon rain forest doesn't change much. It stays hot (25°C–35°C) all through the year. It is wet in the summer and wetter in the winter. It often rains, and there is a short, heavy shower almost every afternoon. A rain forest has more than two meters of rain every year. In some places, more than ten meters of rain falls each year.

The air is hot and wet all the time because most of the water stays in the trees. First, the rain falls on the tops of the tallest trees. Slowly, it runs from leaf to leaf and down the trees to the ground. This all takes about ten minutes, and only a little rain gets to the ground. The air in and above the trees gets very hot from the sun in the middle of the day, so the hot, wet air goes up. It gets colder, and the water in the air falls. And that makes more rain.

Food from the Forest

There are 3,000 or more fruits in the rain forests of the world. People in Europe and the US use only about two hundred of them. Rain forest plants gave us many of our everyday foods—fruits and vegetables, coffee, tea, chocolate, and sugar. Today, we grow these on farms in many countries, but they came first from the rain forests.

The Indians of the forest use more than 2,000 of its plants. They grow them on their small farms around their houses and they take them to the forest. They also plant fruit trees and go back to them year after year.

There are also thousands of plants without names in the rain forests today. Will they be new, cheap foods for the world? Maybe—maybe not. The rain forests are getting smaller, and we are losing many hundreds of kinds of plants every year.

Medicines for All

When we are sick, we go to the doctor. We get medicines for different diseases. A quarter of the medicines in the world come from rain forest plants. Doctors are finding new medicines every year in these plants. They say that there is a possible use for about 10% of them. But the plants of the rain forests are disappearing fast, before we can try them.

People sometimes ask, "Why are rain forests important?" This is one very good answer—for food and medicines, now and in the future.

CURARE



For hundreds of years, the Indians put *curare*, a very strong poison from a rain forest tree, on the ends of their arrows. These days, doctors in the hospitals of the world also use *curare*. They don't kill people with it, of course. It is a very good medicine.

Why Are Rain Forests Disappearing?

How do you make a rain forest?

Take a place in the world with very hot, wet weather. Then wait about 10,000,000 years.

How do you lose a rain forest?

Move a lot of farmers into the forest. Then wait for about 100 years.

Every year, the rain forests of the world are getting smaller. We are losing them day after day.

This is happening to rain forests in Africa, in Asia, and in South America. Between the years 1900 and 2000, we lost half of the world's rain forests. Every country wanted to make money from its forests, and there were customers all over the world.

Between the years 1978 and 1988, about 15,000 square kilometers of Amazon rain forest disappeared every year.

The weather is changing, too. Heavy rain falls every day. Without the trees, the rain falls on the ground and washes the soil into the rivers. Then the soil is no good for plants. It is thin and dry. And then later, because there are no trees, there is no rain. In many places now, it doesn't rain every day. There is no rain for a time, and then there is a lot of rain. This is very bad for farmers. In some places, there is no green forest. It is dry, brown soil.

Rain forests around the world are disappearing, and the weather is changing. Ice is slowly disappearing from the oceans, so the oceans are getting higher. In many countries, there is more rain and the winds are stronger. Forest trees take dirty air from our cities and make it clean. Without rain forests, the world's weather will get worse.

Everybody Wants Wood!

When Europeans came to South America in the 1600s, they took wood from the forest for houses and ships. The trees were taller than European trees, and their wood was hard and strong. There were beautiful colors—dark reds and browns.

Before the year 1700, furniture-makers in the US and Europe used wood from the trees in their countries. This wood wasn't very strong, so chairs and tables were thick and square. But in the 1700s, they found the hardwoods of the rain forests. New furniture was suddenly thin, strong, and beautiful. Everybody wanted furniture from this beautiful new wood.

In 1754 Thomas Chippendale, a furniture-maker in London, made a book with 160 pictures of his new ideas for chairs, tables, desks, beds, closets, boxes, and shelves, all from these new, hard rain forest woods. Rich customers came to him. They wanted this new furniture in their big country houses. Chippendale's book arrived in other European countries and in North America. The new furniture was made in Boston and Philadelphia with hardwoods from the rain forests of the world. The North American people loved these exciting new ideas from Europe.

But in Jamaica, in Cuba, in the Americas, people cut down the big, old hardwood trees year after year. Two hundred years later, the best trees were in the middle of the forests, a long way from roads and ships.

So companies around the Amazon rain forest sent workers into the forest. These men found the big hardwood trees here and there. They cut them down and pulled them a long way out of the forest. Then they moved them by road or by river to the cities. But when they cut down one big tree, they killed twenty more around it. They made a lot of money, but in places near rivers and roads the forest started to die.

The companies wanted more roads—and bigger roads. In the 1970s, Brazil built a lot of new roads into and around the rain forest. One of these roads is 5,300 kilometers long and goes from Recife, next to the Atlantic Ocean, to the Andes in Peru. Big companies could use these new roads. They started to cut down the hardwood trees in large numbers. They pulled the trees to the roads and moved them to the cities.

This hardwood from the forest is very expensive. When companies sell it, it brings a lot of money into Brazil.



Big companies cut down the hardwood trees in large numbers and sold the wood to other countries.

The People of the Rain Forest

The first people in the rain forests, of course, were the “Indians,” or “Amerindians.” The Europeans gave this name to the people in North and South America when they arrived there. There were Indians in the Americas for thousands of years before Europeans came. Today, there are about 350,000 Indians in the Amazon rain forest, but they live in small numbers in different places. Sometimes three or four hundred live in one place; sometimes there are only seventy or eighty. They speak different languages and live in different ways.

The Yanumami live in the forest between Venezuela and Brazil. Ten or more families live in different rooms around one larger room. Everybody uses the big room in the center. They call their home a *shabono*. The Kayapo people live next to the Xingu River in the south of Brazil. They build small houses around open ground. There are nine different Indian peoples on the Xingu River—about 14,000 people. From the Pizabo people of Peru to the Sinabo in Bolivia, there are more than two hundred different Indian peoples in the Amazon rain forest. They speak ninety different languages. But most Indians also speak Portuguese now.

There are many different Indian peoples, but they all live in the forest. They know it well and use it in many ways. They eat the food from its plants. They use its plants for medicines. They grow food on small farms. They catch fish in the rivers. They kill animals for meat. They make poisons from plants and frogs, and put them on the ends of their arrows.

Every four or five years, they move their homes to another place in the forest because the soil is tired and dry. Then the forest starts growing there again.

A DANGEROUS LITTLE FROG



It is not really dangerous in the forest. The big animals are afraid of you and run away. The most dangerous animals are usually very small. This little frog can sit in a small spoon, but nothing in the forest eats it. Its colors—yellow, red, or black—are very strong. These colors say, “Don’t eat

me! I’m dangerous!” There are many of these frogs of many different colors, and they all have a very strong poison on them. Its name is the “arrow-poison frog” because Indians use its poison on their arrows.

In about the year 1500, “white men” from Portugal came to South America. They found the Indians in the forests. At that time, there were about 4,000,000 of them. What happened to them? A lot of them died because Europeans brought new diseases. Indians caught these new diseases. Sometimes the Indians fought the white men, and the Europeans killed them. By the year 1900, there were only about 150,000 Indians in the forests of South America. But in the 1960s, the countries of South America started to help the Indians.

The number of Indians is getting bigger now year after year. In Brazil, many live in “Terras Indigenas.” These are places in the forest only for the Indians. They live in their forest homes and grow food on small farms. They have their schools and hospitals. Doctors come and ask them about the plants in the forest. They want to learn about Indian medicines. There are also forest parks in many countries. Here, visitors and people on vacation can see the wildlife of the rain forest. Many Indians live and work in these parks.

For four hundred years, the number of Indians fell, but a lot of other people arrived in Brazil. First, the Portuguese came. They were the only Europeans there in large numbers for three hundred years. Then the Italians and the French arrived, and a lot of Africans. These new people made very big farms in the south east of Brazil. They grew a lot of coffee and took rubber from the trees of the forest. With the money from the coffee and the rubber, they built new roads and cities. Later the Germans came, and the Japanese. Now there are 180,000,000 people in Brazil. Almost all of them speak Portuguese. Most of them live in the big cities near the ocean.

An Old Man’s Story

Jose and his sister Maria are students at a school in São Paulo. They are visiting the Kayapo people. They want to write about the Amazon Indians in their school newspaper. An old Kayapo Indian is telling them about the life of his people.

“I’m a very old man. My children have children. My people live here on the Xingu River. We lived here for thousands of years before the ‘white men’ came. We know the forest. We live in it and with it. We make small farms next to our houses. We grow food. We catch fish and animals. We move from place to place when the soil is tired. The forest trees come back

slowly. It's not the old rain forest, but wildlife and plants come back. There aren't many of us, so it's not a problem for the rain forest. Sometimes we plant fruit trees and leave them. After many years, we can go back to that place and enjoy the fruit.

"When the white men came into the forest, sometimes we fought them for our homes. But we had arrows and they had guns. They killed us easily. So we moved away from the white men, into the center of the forest. Then they made big new roads through it. They started to cut down the trees and make farms. They also brought many diseases, new diseases for us. For them, these diseases were not a problem. They were sick for a day or maybe a week. But the diseases killed 85% of my people. What could we do? Now much of the forest is dead and there are big farms for cattle.

"A lot of us live with the white men now. Some of our people live in the new parks. People come from other countries and look at the wildlife. Doctors come and ask us about the plants in the forest. We know them and use them for medicines. We know more about them than the doctors."

The Life of the Kayapo

"Tell us about your life here in the forest," says Maria. "What do you do every day? What do you eat?"

"We have a good life," the old man says. "Our life today is not very different from the old times.

"About every five years we go to a new place on the river. We build our houses, and we plant our little farms. The men and the women have different work. The men cut down trees for our houses and farms. They also make the boats. This is important because we usually move by boat, on the water. The men get the meat and fish. They catch fish in the river or kill animals for meat. Today we have guns, but they are expensive.

Many men like to use arrows because it's cheaper. We get poisons from plants and frogs and put them on our arrows.

"The women plant the little farms and look after them. The children help them. The women make the fires and cook the food. They usually put meat or fish in big, wet leaves and cook them on the open fire.

"In the evenings we play music and tell stories. We like to have big parties. We put colors on our faces, usually red and black. We make the colors from plants. We like to sing and dance."

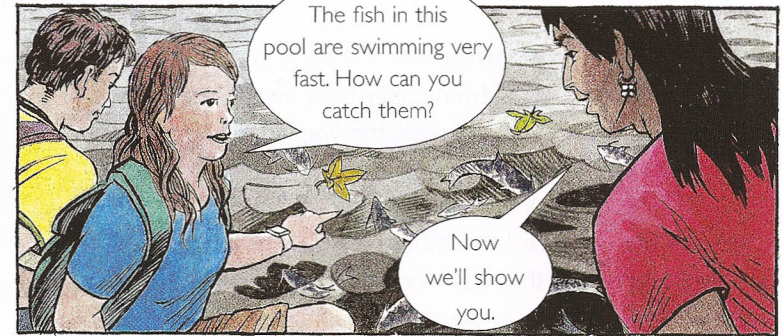
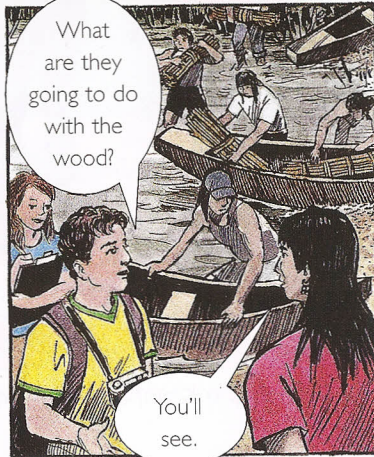
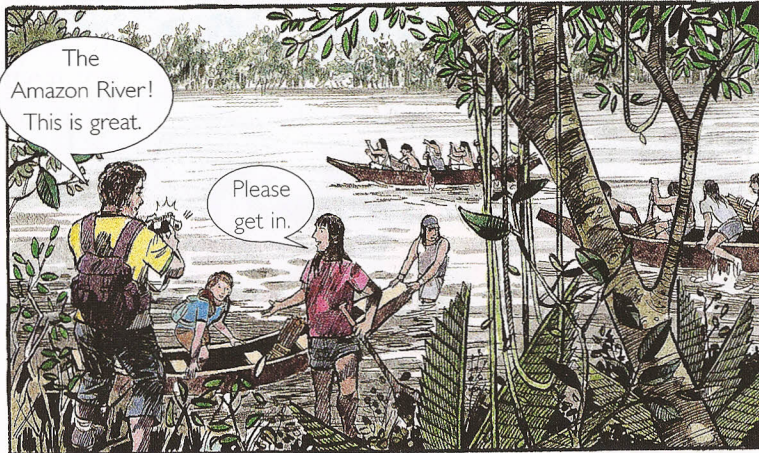


The men of the Kayapo like to put colors on their bodies and faces.

Jose and Maria Go Fishing

Jose and Maria are visiting the Kayapo Indians in their rain forest home.

We're going fishing now. Would you like to join us?



The Taxi Driver's Story

Jose and Maria are going home after their visit to the Indians. They stop for a weekend in Manaus on the way. They are talking to a taxi driver about the Indians. The taxi driver is not happy.

"Why are these Indians important?" he asks. "There's a very small number of them. I think there are only around 350,000 Indians in Brazil. But they get money, and they live in parks in the forest. They don't work. I have to work hard—my family, too. I'll tell you about my family.

"When I was a small child, my family lived near São Paulo. It was a big city in those days. Not as big as today, but very big. We weren't rich. My father had no work, no money, no house. We had nothing. Then Brazil had a new plan. People made big roads into the forest. They wanted to move the poor people from the cities into the forest.

"They said, 'You can go into the forest and start farms there. The soil of the forest is rich, and it's free. You can have a square kilometer of ground next to a road. You don't have to pay for the ground, and you can have money for six months. We'll give you seeds and you can plant coffee or fruits. You can sell these in the cities.' It cost the country \$65,000 for each family.

"My family and hundreds and hundreds of other people went into the forest. We worked night and day. We cut down the forest trees and made small farms. We built small houses of wood. We planted coffee and sugar and fruit. It was wonderful. My father and mother were very happy. We had work, we had a house. We felt rich.

"The first year, everything was fine. But there was a problem—a big problem. The soil was not rich, and there was not much of it. The rain washed it away. The third year we were hungry. We couldn't sell anything. The fourth year was the worst. The plants died and we had no food. So we moved to a new place in the

forest, and we started again. But it was the same story. We had no future. So we went back to the cities and looked for work there. My family came to Manaus. My father got a job in the port, and now I'm a taxi driver. We're OK. I'm sorry about the Indians, but we have to live, too."

"So what happened to the rain forest next to the roads?" asks Maria.

"It died," said the taxi driver. "There's nothing there now. No farms, no forest trees, and not many people."



There's nothing there now. No farms, no forest trees, and not many people.

Manaus—Paris of the Forest

Manaus is a wonderful city. It is 1,500 kilometers from the Atlantic Ocean, in the center of the Amazon rain forest. It is on the River Negro, about eighteen kilometers north of the Amazon. Big ships come into the busy port of Manaus every day from other countries. These ships take out wood, rubber, fruit, food, and many other things from the forest.

The first Europeans came to this place in the year 1669 and built a small town. In the forest around the town, there were a lot of rubber trees. At that time, rubber was very expensive. It made a lot of money for the Portuguese people in Manaus. They sent Indians into the forest and the Indians cut the rubber trees. The rubber “milk” ran out, and the Indians brought it back to the city. This doesn't kill the trees. You can take rubber from the same trees year after year. Between the years 1890 and 1920, Manaus was full of rich people. They built wonderful, expensive buildings. They had money for everything. People called Manaus the “Paris of the forest.”

But in the 1920s, the good times ended. Two things happened. First, people in the US and in Britain made a cheaper kind of rubber. Also, in the year 1876 an Englishman, Sir Henry Wickham, took some rubber tree seeds from the Amazon to London. The British then sent rubber tree plants to Singapore, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies (now Malaysia and Indonesia).

After a short time, there were rubber farms everywhere in Southeast Asia, and the cost of rubber fell. By the year 1930, 90% of the world's rubber came from Southeast Asia.

Today, Manaus is an interesting city. It is a good place for a vacation because it has beautiful old buildings. Also it is a good place for vacation trips into the rain forest.

THE AMAZON THEATER



At the end of the 1800s, there were about a hundred very rich families in Manaus. They had a lot of money from rubber and they wanted to hear European music. There were no radios or televisions in those days, so in the year 1896 they built a big theater and brought singers from the US and Europe to Manaus. Then they could listen to the wonderful music of Verdi, Puccini, and Mozart.

The “Teatro Amazonas” (Amazon Theater) is the most beautiful building in Manaus. From outside, the round top is all blue and yellow. These are the colors of Brazil. Inside, 640 people can sit and enjoy the music. Around the walls, and in other rooms, you can see beautiful pictures and also the first plans for the building.

The Cattle Farmer

Jose and Maria are flying back to São Paulo. They are looking at photos of their Indian friends.

"Those are nice photos," says the man next to them. "Were you on vacation in the rain forest?"

"Not really," Maria answers. "We're writing about the Indians for our school newspaper. The Indians and the rain forest are very important for the future of our country."

"Really?" says the man. "Who paid for your school, or this airplane? Not the Indians. I did. Your parents did. I'm a cattle farmer, and 20% of our country is farms for cattle. I sell my meat to other countries and bring a lot of money into Brazil. Other farmers grow coffee and fruit, and we get rubber and wood from the forest. I don't want big companies from other countries here, but our farmers work hard. And our work is important for Brazil."

"How many cattle are there in South America? Do you know? There are about 220,000,000. That's a lot of ground for cattle farms—more than 100,000 square kilometers. And yes, a lot of that ground was forest before we made the farms. But we have to have open ground, without trees. Cattle can't live in a forest."

"But the wildlife, and the Indians—" says Jose.

"We have almost 4,000,000 square kilometers of forest today. We aren't going to cut it all down. There will always be a place for Indians, for wildlife, for trees. That is important. But I want a great future for this country. Do you and your children want to live in the forest on fish and fruit? Or do you want to live in one of the most exciting cities in the world, in Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo?"

Plans for the Rain Forest

In the year 1992, people from 150 countries met in Rio de Janeiro. They said, "Year after year, the rain forests of the world are disappearing—not only in South America, but in Africa and Asia, too. The world's weather is changing, and we are losing plants and animals every day. The future of these forests is important for all of us. We have to make plans for their future now."

Here are some of their ideas:

- We have to study and name the rain forest plants.
- We have to make parks in the rain forests. In these parks, nobody can start fires or cut down trees.
- We have to plant new trees. A new forest is not as good as an old forest, but it is better than no forest.
- We have to help the Indians. They can live in the rain forests and look after them.
- We can build vacation centers for visitors in the forest parks. This will bring jobs to the people of the rain forests.

Today, more than 10,000,000 people live in the Amazon rain forest. There are fires, and there are new farms. But more than 250,000 square kilometers of Brazil's forest are now parks, or are going to be parks. More and more people are taking vacations in the forest, too. This means hundreds of new jobs. It is good for the future of the forest.

But in other places in Brazil, and in other countries in South America and around the world, rain forests are getting smaller. Rain forests are important—to us, to our children, to our children's children. We can do something about them, but we have to do it now. So we all have to think: how can I help?

ACTIVITIES

Pages 1–9

Before you read

- 1 What is Brazil most famous for? Football, coffee, Rio de Janeiro, the rain forest...? Discuss this question with other students.
- 2 Look at the Word List at the back of the book.
 - a What are the words in your language?
 - b Do you have a back yard? What do you grow in it?
 - c Read these sentences. Talk about the different uses of the words in *italics*.

A

There is a lot of *forest*.
What *food* do you buy?
Fruit grows on trees.

B

There are a lot of *forests*.
What *foods* do you buy?
Fruits grow on trees.

- 3 Answer the questions on page 1. What do you know about the Amazon rain forest? Then read the Introduction on page iv.

While you read

- 4 Read these sentences. Which is the right word in each sentence?
 - a The Andes mountains are to the *east*/*west* of the rain forest.
 - b The time of heavy rain in Brazil is *before*/*after* March.
 - c There are *two*/*no* bridges over the Amazon.
 - d Manaus is a city on the *Negro*/*Amazon* River.
 - e From August to November the water in the Amazon goes *up*/*down*.
 - f Piranhas are *big*/*small* fish.
 - g Under the forest trees the air is usually *wet*/*dry*.
 - h People in the US and Europe eat *200/2,000* foods from rain forests.
 - i Around 10% of the rain forest plants can give us *medicines*/*poisons*.

After you read

- 5 Answer these questions. Discuss your answers.
 - a What problems do the *caboclos* have?
 - b Manaus is 1,500 kilometers from the ocean. Why is it an important port?
 - c Where do most of the rain forest birds and animals live?
 - d Why does it rain almost every day in the forests?
 - e Why are rain forests important for doctors?

Pages 10–15

Before you read

- 6 Discuss these questions.
 - a What is happening to the rain forests of the world?
 - b What do you know about the Indians of North and South America?

While you read

- 7 Write one word in each sentence.
 - a The rain forests of the world are getting every year.
 - b Without the rain forests, the weather is getting
 - c The wood from the forest trees was hard, strong, and had beautiful
 - d Big companies moved the wood from the middle of the forest to the cities on big new
 - e When the workers cut down one big hardwood tree in the forest, they twenty more.
 - f Amazon Indians speak many different
 - g The Indians put from little frogs on their arrows.
 - h A lot of the Indians died because they caught European
 - i The number of Indians in the rain forest today is getting
 - j The Europeans in Brazil made a lot of money from coffee and

After you read

- 8 Look at the picture on page 12 and discuss these questions.
- What is happening?
 - Why?
 - What is going to happen to the wood?
 - Is this a problem for the rain forest? Why (not)?

Pages 15–25

Before you read

- 9 What do you know about the lives of the Amazon Indians today?
How do you know about them? Discuss your answers.

While you read

- 10 Are these sentences right (✓) or wrong (X)?
- More Indians died from diseases than from fights with the Portuguese.
 - The Kayapo Indians move their homes every year.
 - Brazil gave the taxi driver's family money for a new life in the forest.
 - After four years the family was rich and built a second farm.
 - The rubber trees disappeared because Indians cut them down.
 - Sir Henry Wickham took hundreds of small rubber trees to London.
 - Today, most of the world's rubber comes from South America.
 - The theater in Manaus is more than a hundred years old.
 - A quarter of Brazil is now cattle farms.
 - In the new parks, nobody can cut down trees.
 - A lot of people now take vacations in the rain forests.

After you read

- 11 Discuss these questions. What do you think?
- How is life better for the Indians today than it was in 1950?
 - Look at the plans for the future of the rain forests on page 25. Are they difficult or easy? Are they important? How can you help?
 - Would you like to take a vacation in a rain forest park? Why (not)?

Writing

- You are helping Jose and Marie with their school newspaper. Write 50–80 words about the life of the Kayapo Indians today.
- You are going to Manaus on vacation next August. Write a short letter to the Amazon Theater. What can you see there in that month? How much are the tickets? How can you get them?
- You are on vacation in a forest park near Manaus. Yesterday you took a boat trip into the forest and visited some Indians. Write a card to a friend and tell him about your trip.
- You went fishing with the Kayapo Indians today. Write a letter to your family and tell them about it.
- Why are the rain forests of the world important? Answer this question in 50–80 words.
- "People are more important than trees." Write about this for a magazine.

Answers for the Activities in this book are available from the Penguin Readers website.
A free Activity Worksheet is also available from the website. Activity Worksheets are part of the Penguin Teacher Support Programme, which also includes Progress Tests and Graded Reader Guidelines. For more information, please visit:
www.penguinreaders.com

WORD LIST *with example sentences*

- air** (n) At the top of the mountain, the *air* is always clean.
- arrow** (n) The dead animal had an *arrow* in its back.
- cattle** (n) *Cattle* give us milk and meat.
- disappear** (v) I can't find John. He went into the trees and *disappeared*.
- disease** (n) Every year, doctors find new *diseases*.
- forest** (n) It is a big *forest*, with thousands of trees.
- frog** (n) The small green *frog* jumped into the pool.
- furniture** (n) Let's buy new *furniture* for the kitchen. The table and chairs are really old.
- grow** (v) The flowers in our yard *grow* tall and beautiful every year.
- leaf** (n) In the fall, the *leaves* on our trees turn brown.
- medicine** (n) The doctor gave me some *medicine* when I was sick.
- piranha** (n) We saw a lot of *piranha* fish in the rivers in Brazil.
- plant** (n/v) When I *planted* flowers next to the wall in my yard, they died.
- poison** (n) Somebody put *poison* in the dog's food. The dog almost died.
- poor** (adj) *Poor* people can't buy houses in the city. Houses are very expensive.
- port** (n) When the ship arrived in the *port*, the men visited the town's bars.
- root** (n) The *roots* of the trees next to my house are pushing under the walls.
- rubber** (n) *Rubber* trees grow in many hot countries.
- seed** (n) We grow our vegetables from *seeds*.
- soil** (n) You have to have good *soil*, or your plants will be small and weak.

PENGUIN READERS *recommends*



White Fang

Jack London

White Fang is a wolf from the mountains of Canada. His life is hard but he is happy in his world. Then he is taken to the world of men. There he learns to fight and to kill. White Fang knows nothing about love. But one day he meets Scott...

Fly Away Home

Patricia Hermes

Amy Alden finds a nest of Goose's eggs. The baby geese follow her all the time – they think she is her mother. Now the geese must fly south for the winter. Amy and her dad must help them fly away home...

Black Beauty

Anna Sewell

'Always be good, so people will love you. Always work hard and do your best.'

These were the words of Black Beauty's mother to her son when they lived with Farmer Grey. But when Black Beauty grew up and his life changed, this was sometimes very difficult for him. Not everybody was as kind as Farmer Grey.

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